

them up for a birthday club. Others dress their children up to have a picture taken by a professional photographer and fill out a form before the picture is snapped. Or maybe they're at the local supermarket when they fill out a consumer survey about their family's buying habits in exchange for a free product or some discount coupons.

What these parents probably don't know is that the personal and sometimes sensitive information they've innocently provided about their children is for sale. And anyone, anytime can purchase it. Commercial list companies are using that information to develop an elaborate data base on virtually every child in America. They're gathering children's complete names, ages, addresses, and phone numbers—and often even their personal likes and dislikes.

And the fact is these list vendors sell this information freely to whoever wants to purchase it. Anyone with nothing more than a mailing address can contact a list vendor and order a specific list. It might be the names, addresses and phone numbers of all children living in a neighborhood—or a listing of all 10-year-old boys in a particular community who have a video game systems. And the cost of this information is relatively inexpensive.

Most parents have no idea that information about their children is for sale by hundreds of list vendors. Often, parents have no idea why their children are solicited by direct mail advertisers or tele-marketers. But the danger of this information winding up in the wrong hands is very real and very frightening.

Earlier this month a news report by KCBS-TV in Los Angeles vividly demonstrated the threat to our children's safety from the uncontrolled sale of information about children. The station ordered a list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of 5,000 Los Angeles children from the Nation's largest distributor of lists, Metromail. It placed the order in the name of Richard Allen Davis, the man now on trial for kidnapping 12-year-old Polly Klaas from her Sausalito home and murdering her. After providing nothing more than a fake name, mailing address and a disconnected phone number, the list arrived the next day. The cost: just \$277, cash on delivery.

We must act now to protect our children before a real murderer or child molester buys a list of potential victims. There's something fundamentally wrong when society takes more care in protecting information about criminals than it does in protecting information about our children from those who would harm them.

The most important provision of the Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act would ensure that personal information about a child could no longer be bought and sold without a parent's consent. Concern about protecting the privacy and safety of children has brought together a broad cross-section of groups in support of this initiative including the Center for Media Education, the Christian Coalition, the Consumer Federation of America, the Electronic Privacy Information Center, Enough is Enough, the Family Research Council, the Kids Off Lists Coalition, the Klaas Foundation for Children, the National Law Center for Children, and Families and Privacy Times. While there may be little we can do to stop a child molester from stalking children when they're playing in the park or walking home from school, our legislation takes some common-sense steps to protect the privacy of children.

The legislation would give parents the right to compel list brokers to release to them all the information they have compiled about their child. In addition, the list vendor would have to turn over to the parents the name of anyone to whom they have distributed personal information about their child. Our bill would force list vendors to be more diligent about verifying the identity of companies and individuals seeking to buy lists of children. Specifically, it would be a criminal offense for a list vendor to provide personal information about children to anyone it has reason to believe would use that information to harm a child. Finally, there is a provision in the bill to address an alarming practice that was actually used by one list company. The company had a contract with a Texas prison for data entry services. That means that prisoners, including child molesters and pedophiles, were being handed personal information about children to enter into a computer data base. Although the company no longer uses prison labor, our bill would prohibit this dangerous practice from ever being used again. Prisoners and convicted sex offenders would never again have access to personal information about children.

In today's high-tech information age—when access to information on our personal lives is just a keystroke or phone call away—our children need this special protection. I urge my colleagues to support the Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act.

#### CONGRATULATIONS CHRISTIAN A. DASMARINAS, 1996 CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION WINNER

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 1996

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, in my home district of Guam, we have many outstanding people. However, one young man from the village of Tamuning deserves special mention. This year, Christian Ragos Dasmarrinas is the young artist from Guam to have his artwork displayed in our Capitol corridor. Christian's winning artwork is an evocative batik, featuring a Chamorro warrior resting against a lane in the shade of the tree. The batik expresses much about Chamorro culture and history. It is unmistakably Pacific and depicts our appreciation of our natural environment and our tropical island life.

In an era of intense gang violence and drug abuse, such a triumph is worth mentioning. His talent for art predicts future successes, but there are many things about Christian worth mentioning.

This young artist plans to attend college and major in computer programming. He aspires to become a Computer Aided Designer [CAD]. As a career in art would be inherent for Christian, this young man also plays the guitar for a local band, Anaesthesia. I envision Christian creating computer programs for students interested in the fields of art and music.

Christian is the second of the four children of Norberto and Cynthia Dasmarrinas. In 1993, Christian and his family immigrated from the Philippines to the United States to secure a better way of life and attain a piece of the American dream.

Christian has begun his journey to achieve that goal. He will graduate from the John F. Kennedy High school in 1998. Although this is his first award, it will certainly not be his last. Its hard to keep up with him. When he is not creating artistic work, he's strumming his guitar or surfing on the internet for a friend.

He has made his friends and family proud, and I am pleased to have his artwork represent Guam.

Congratulations to Christian Dasmarrinas, who has mastered a fine piece.

#### NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 1996

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Missing Children's Day May 25, and ask that my colleagues and the entire Nation remember the 1 million children reported missing in the United States.

Every State in our Nation has experienced the tragedy of a child heartlessly taken from family, friends, and the community at the hands of a kidnapper. In my home State of Minnesota, the community of St. Joseph continues to struggle and tries to understand the abduction of Jacob Wetterling, a healthy, happy child who this year would have graduated with the rest of his classmates at Apollo High School in St. Cloud.

Jacob Wetterling was abducted in 1989. Since his tragic disappearance, Jacob's family and friends have reminded us that life can be dramatically changed in a matter of moments. They remind us that even the seemingly most peaceful town can face tragedy of massive proportions. They remind us that every community in every State has a responsibility to offer safety and protection to its children.

Jacob's family and friends have shown their commitment to Jacob and other children by establishing the Jacob Wetterling Foundation. The foundation works tirelessly to promote child safety, support families, and search for missing children.

The Jacob Wetterling Foundation played an essential role in my efforts to enact Federal legislation to address the horrendous epidemic of sexual crimes against children.

Fully two-thirds of the nonfamily child abduction cases reported to police involve sexual assault. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that 74 percent of imprisoned child sex offenders had one or more prior convictions for a sexual offense against a child. Another study found that those who prey on young boys commit an average of 281 acts of molestation.

According to the Department of Justice, over 100,000 children are targets of attempted abductions each year. Thankfully, most attempts are unsuccessful, but thousands like Jacob tragically disappear.

That's why the Wetterling Foundation and Jacob's parents, Patty and Jerry Wetterling, worked tirelessly to help me pass the 1994 Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children Registration Act.

The Wetterling Act provides for the registration of convicted child sex offenders and violent sexual predators. This national requirement was needed because of the propensity